

**TOWN OF GRANBY
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES
JUNE 21, 2012**

The public hearing of the Board of Selectmen was called to order by First Selectman John Adams at 7:02 p.m.

PRESENT: John Adams, Ronald Desrosiers, B. Scott Kuhnly, Mark Neumann, and William F. Smith, Jr., Town Manager

ALSO PRESENT: Francis Brady, Chairman of the Charter Revision Commission

First Selectman Adams opened the public hearing for the purpose of hearing public comment regarding the proposed amendments to the Granby Town Charter.

First Selectman Adams read the legal notice, which was posted with the Town Clerk and published in the Hartford Courant on June 8, 2012.

An opening statement was made by First Selectman Adams, in which he explained tonight's procedure of the meeting. Tonight's meeting is for the Selectmen to listen to the public. They will then discuss and vote on the Charter Revision at their July 2, 2012 meeting.

Jerry Ledger, Bushy Hill Road, called for a point of order and asked about a Moderator being at tonight's meeting. First Selectman Adams explained this is a public hearing and he is the moderator.

Francis Brady, Chairman of the Charter Revision Commission, spoke and reviewed the presented changes to the Charter. He acknowledged the residents' petition addressing their desire to change the voting process for the budget to a referendum vote, with approximately 1,400 signatures, which was filed with the Town Clerk. He reviewed the Commission's suggested changes, including changing the count to 250 residents being present and voting at the Budget Town Meeting.

First Selectman Adams asked Town Manager Smith if any written correspondence regarding the Charter was received. Mr. Smith said he received a letter in May from Ian Gebow and Lisa Weppner, 13 Tinker Trail, about the budgetary voting process. It was noted that the Town Clerk received a petition from approximately 1,400 residents regarding the way the budget is voted upon. This information will be considered by the Board.

Public Input

Thirteen residents spoke out sharing their views on the proposed amendments to the Charter, especially regarding voting on the town budget. All of them commented that the way the budget is voted on presently is outdated. They all favor changing the process to a referendum vote on the budget. Items mentioned included:

- People who work evening shifts are unable to vote on the budget.
- Older people don't go out at night, therefore miss the town meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

June 21, 2012

Page 2

- No absentee ballots are available for the budget vote.
- Any changes made to the Charter will remain in effect for the next ten years, so budget voting changes should be thought out carefully.
- The proposed change to have 250 voters present at the Budget Town Meeting doesn't satisfy this group of residents.
- Fairness - to make sure all residents can vote on the Budget is the wish of a majority of voters and shouldn't be ignored.
- Possibly separating the budgets for the town and Board of Education was mentioned.
- Bring the Charter into the 21st century by making changes that can include all residents in the voting process for the budget.
- Cost of a referendum was reviewed. It is estimated to cost approximately \$3,500 for a referendum. Many volunteers work at a referendum. Should the number of volunteers fade away, the cost would increase.
- One resident spoke about initiating term limits for elected officials and possibly consolidating the position of Town Manager and First Selectman, for a cost savings.
- Comments were made regarding uncontested elections in town. It is thought more people need to become involved and run to serve as an elected official.

No other public addressed the Board. The public hearing was closed at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William F. Smith, Jr.
Town Manager